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THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

CHAPTER III.

SWEDENBORG says that the Divine Providence is most particular with every man, in leading him from moment to moment, even from his birth, so that he may at length be brought into the highest degree of good and happiness which he can become capable of receiving and enjoying, and in which he will be willing to remain permanently. But there are so many things which daily present themselves to the view of every observing person, which appear quite contradictory to such a supposition, that it may be highly useful to entertain some considerations which may be helpful in dispelling the doubts which are so liable to arise in the mind, concerning the Lord's providence.

It must be confessed that some of the most important things are very poorly and imperfectly done in this world.

This appears to be the case with the education of children, and the ministrations of religion, and yet on these two things our eternal welfare more directly depends, than on anything else which is committed to human instrumentality. They seem so imperfectly done, that it becomes very difficult to believe that the Lord has done the best that He could in respect to these things for all and every one of us. With regard to education, we see that some parents

are too ignorant, some too negligent and slothful, and some too vicious, to give their children good instruction; that bad example often more than counteracts the influence of good lessons; that many are left orphans at an early age at the mercy of a cold and heartless world; that many of these get no education at all, except what they can pick up in the street; that even good and well-meaning parents sometimes make great mistakes in the discipline and education of their children. How can we believe that in all these cases the best which could be has been done? for quite often, to human appearance, great mischief instead of good seems to be done. If we regard alone what is done by and through men in these cases, the prospect seems a very sad one, and a large portion of the helpless young seem to be wronged out of some of their most indispensable needs.

But what is really the most important and the most essential part of the Lord's care and provision for children, is accomplished through the angels; and this part never fails of being done. What I mean is the implantation of remains — the innocent states of affection, which result from angelic association — in the infantile mind. There is no doubt that the co-operation of good parents and teachers may give very much assistance towards strengthening and increasing the fulness of these remains, but they are always given, whether with or without human co-operation. More than this: we may believe that all the circumstances by which a child is surrounded, all the events which befall him, seemingly adverse as well as seemingly favorable conditions, are all made means and occasions of the implantation of just such kind of remains as may be most needful for the use of future life. I have no doubt that some foundations for future good are laid by angelic influence and operation, in the pains and sorrows, the wants and privations of infancy, as well as in its pleasures and enjoyments.

Great, then, as is the good which wise parents and instructors may be able to do to the children under their care, it must be regarded as altogether subordinate to that which

the Lord does for them. And He may see that, in some cases, much of it, or all of it may be dispensed with, or its place supplied by some different sort of training and experience.

And even if, in the imperfection necessarily belonging to human affairs, something should still be lacking which He sees to be desirable, He may foresee and provide some future compensation for it. Human character and disposition is so various, that the same good is far from being equally good, if good at all, to every one. And when we see, as we often do, how children prove themselves altogether unworthy of the good instruction and educational advantages which have been spent upon them, we need not wonder that Providence should find very small external advantages sufficient for the discipline of some children. There may be good reason for believing that the training and discipline which parents are disposed to give their own children may be more especially adapted to their needs, while they inherit the particular faults and evils of their parents, than what we should call better teaching might be. And this may be the case even with the defective education given by bad and vicious parents.

The New-Church doctrines give us no reason to expect that all men will finally be saved and brought into heaven, but that all will go to heaven who can be led thither in freedom; for no one can be driven or compelled to go there. The necessity of preserving human freedom inviolate, necessitates also the permission of many things, which are, to human view, adverse to the very designs of the Lord's providence. Among these are those very defects and deficiencies in moral and religious training, which were referred to at the commencement of this chapter. There is one negative advantage which may sometimes follow in consequence of these deficiencies. Those who are poorly instructed, will not be accountable for their failures to obey truths which they had never been taught. It may be the design of Providence, with those who it foresees will not

be willing to profit by good instruction, that they should fail to receive it, to lessen their accountability and their condemnation, if they must finally be condemned.

Swedenborg says, in his treatise on the Divine Providence, that the Lord is careful not to lead man into good and heavenly states, any farther or faster than he can be kept permanently in them. For if he should afterward recede from them and turn back to evil, his latter end would be much worse than the first. And therefore the Lord may see fit that those whom He knows cannot be willingly led into heavenly good, should never at any time be brought very near even to the outer gates of salvation.

This matter may be further illustrated by the state of religion and of religious teaching in the world. The greater part of the nations on the earth are what we call heathen or Gentiles, and mostly worshippers of idols. But according to Swedenborg, a larger proportion of these are saved than of Christians, though the heaven which they inhabit is of a more external kind than the Christian heaven. There is among these nations more of the innocence of ignorance than among Christians, and their evils are more external, and less destructive to the soul. And in this, we seem to see a reason why so large a portion of the world should be so long left under the dominion of heathenism. It is not because heathenism is better than Christianity, or as good, but because Christianity is with so great difficulty accepted and practised, and because its truths where they are known and not practised, are liable to such deadly abuse and perversion. And some of these nations whom we call heathen, have precepts of religion similar to the Ten Commandments, which they obey, we may believe, with more sincerity than a large part of the nominal Christian world does the Lord's Commandments.

Further: the ministrations and teaching of religion in Christian countries is very imperfectly and inefficiently done. It is for the most part in the hands of sectarian preachers, who mingle some truth with more or less of what

is false or useless; and, in some countries, in charge of such ignorant priests, that there can scarcely be said to be any teaching at all. But it is remarkable that Swedenborg says, in the Divine Providence, that where the Word is taught by preachings, the Lord teaches therein, and that its being done through a human preacher, does not take away the immediateness of the Lord's teaching. This point deserves careful study, to see how it is so, when the teaching is so sectarian and so one-sided, as is very often the case. And we must understand it in this way: that the Lord inspires the affection of truth in the minds of those who are ready to receive it from the lips of the preacher, and gives them a perception of whatever truth there may be in his discourse, at the same time withholding their minds from fastening upon that which is not true, or else leading them to understand it as in some manner conformable to what they know is true, or else to reject it as unintelligible or incongruous. And if it cannot be prevented that false opinions should be taken for truths, it is provided that they should do as little harm as possible. It is written of them that believe in the Lord, that if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them.

It does not seem easy to see of what use it can be that so many should be left to imbibe and cherish false opinions here, which they will have to unlearn hereafter, and sometimes not without much difficulty; or why they should be permitted to blot their youthful life with wrong and evil deeds, of which they must by and by repent with the bitterest regret and pain. But the fact that man must be led in freedom will help us to explain this. He can only be led in freedom when he is led in accordance with his loves, and not contrary to them. And since the loves which he naturally inherits are more or less evil and selfish in their nature, some evil must be permitted, not only in will and thought, but in deed. It may be taken as true generally, that a man cannot grow up and develop his life and character in this world, without developing some evil, even when good

instruction has served the purpose of withholding him from his worst evils. The Divine problem is, how to bring him through evil, and out of evil into good.

It is not by any means certain that good teaching has been useless, because it has been wantonly disregarded in youth. The echo of parental monition will sound in the ears of the prodigal, hungry and weary in the wilderness, and at length recall him to seek again for mercy in his father's house. Every one does not, indeed, as is represented in the Scripture parable of the prodigal son, wander far away from the paths of morality and external rectitude, but every one must learn, and by some experience be made to feel, that his natural life is evil, before he can be led in the way of regeneration, and become spiritual. And if he does not have this experience in this world, he must have it in the world of spirits before he can come into heaven.

Some are so headstrong that they must be left to go far astray, before they can be recalled to a rational consideration of the errors of their ways; and too many, it is to be feared, go so far that they can never be reclaimed to goodness. But if all cannot be saved and brought into heaven, it is still true, that all are saved some, and constantly withheld from the greater evils into which they would fall, did not the Lord constantly follow and restrain them by the operations of His providence.

There is no doubt that men might be led very easily, not only into the acknowledgment and worship of the Lord, but into the life of religion and morality, by external persuasions affecting the natural mind. But, in spiritual things, the easiest and shortest way may not always be the best way. A man cannot be brought into the good of a religious life, so as to be willing to remain in it, any farther than he denies himself, and shuns evils, in voluntary freedom, as sins against God. And it is difficult and slow work to do this thoroughly and successfully. Providence even seems, sometimes, to retard, rather than to favor, our endeavors and opportunities for doing this work, in order that when it is

done it shall be done with the most mature deliberation, and the greatest firmness of purpose. And it may be necessary that a person should sometimes pass through much bitter experience of the fruit of his own natural evils, before he can become heartily willing to give them up and relinquish them forever.

I spoke, just above, of the negative benefit of diminished responsibility, resulting from being left in ignorance of moral and spiritual truth. I think we can see how there may sometimes be a positive benefit from it; not, indeed, to those who would neglect or reject the truth, but to those who have some genuine desire for it. It is natural for us to prize more highly that which we obtain with labor and difficulty. And so we may be permitted to feel the lack of spiritual good and truth, and to labor for it, even for a long time, seemingly in vain, in order that our love for it may be purified and strengthened, and that we may receive it more heartily when we find it. Man cannot learn to know the Lord by the understanding alone; and so he may sometimes be left to grope as it were in darkness, and to reach out his spiritual hands to feel after God, to feel for the sunshine of His presence; that when it is at length found, he may the more truly and heartily love Him as well as know Him.

It seems, indeed, as though it were the design of Providence, as a general rule, to which some exceptions may be found, to give man, in this world, as little of spiritual truth as can possibly be made to answer his needs; and so he will have the less to neglect and pervert, and yet have enough for his salvation, if he follows it in sincerity. We are led to think so, especially, when we consider how large a majority of mankind are left in the blindness of heathenism, how great ignorance prevails in many countries of Christendom, how poorly and erroneously many are instructed, even where the best education is given, etc. But whatever the appearance may be, it must be understood that it is the deficiencies, imperfections, and perversities of human nature, which make these permissions necessary, and not any unwillingness to

give on the Lord's part. For to give, and not to withhold, is what the Lord most of all desires to do. Mankind are, for the most part, too external and sensual to have much love for spiritual truth, or much capacity for receiving and perceiving it. What desire they have for it is often not sincere and pure enough to be fully trusted. And it is certain that the Lord is more careful to keep alive in man some genuine love for truth, than he is to gratify it fully in this life. And so those who cannot bear the light of noon, must be led in the obscurity of twilight. But in the other world, where the light which shines before the eyes is the light of truth itself, every one will doubtless be assisted to learn, and able to perceive, all that he will need to know, all that he will heartily desire.

Thus, there are various ways in which even our disadvantages, our wants, and privations are turned to account for our future good by the Divine Providence. The painful sense and experience of these wants and privations which we have suffered in this world, may be turned, in the other life, into perceptions of spiritual wants and needs, giving rise to desires for spiritual and heavenly goods, which could not have been awakened in the mind, unless a sense of the want of them had first been felt. It would of course be better if we had been more capable of receiving and appreciating heavenly things in this life; but since it was not so, we may count it well that we may be enabled to receive some measure of them in the other life, though not without much tribulation, and to find a place in some of the many mansions of our Father's house.

I wish to illustrate this matter still further by an extreme case, which very rarely happens, but from which we may be able to form some conclusions respecting the dealings of the Divine Providence with men, under more ordinary circumstances and conditions. There are well-authenticated instances in which children have been stolen away and nursed by wolves, and, if we may so speak, educated among them, so as to have as little of the man, and as much of the beast

as possible, developed in them. What shall we think of the Lord's care and providence for these children? What extreme necessity could have required that they should spend their tenderest years in such savage company, deprived of human association? I take it we have a right to introduce any probable supposition which will assist us in seeing how the Lord might be wise and merciful in permitting it. We may suppose, for example, that they would have proved vicious and disobedient, that they would have learned much evil and little or no good, had they been left in the care of their natural human guardians; that, in short, they would soon have accomplished their own entire spiritual ruin. From this ruin the Lord saw fit, by a harsh expedient, to save them. Deprived of human association and instruction, their moral nature remained entirely undeveloped and closed up. Every one begins life in infancy as a mere animal; but under ordinary circumstances, the more internal human faculties soon begin to be developed and brought forth in their order. But these wolf-taught children were without the means of rising a single step above the mere animal plane. Consequently they were incapable of entertaining any sense of moral accountability. Their innocence, at least, was saved, though at the expense of every possibility of human usefulness in this world. Some such, who had been rescued from their wild life, after having passed over the years properly allotted to instruction, were found to be quite unteachable, and incapable of learning the use of human language.

But on entering the other life, when the natural externals of the mind are laid asleep, their internal receptive faculties would be set free. As they were born men, and not beasts, they will, by degrees, put off the animal and put on the human. Their progress may be very slow, but it will be certain. These children also had their angels with them in infancy, and never having been able to pervert their human faculties, angels must still have continued to be in association with their interiors. And so they can be kept

in good company in the other world, though probably they would continue to occupy a low and inferior station. We are not, however, to assume that every viciously-disposed child would be better off in the end, for being brought up among wolves. We can only infer that there were peculiarities in the disposition of these particular children, which made it best, on the whole, that they should be so brought up. We can hardly suppose that any use could be found in the spiritual world for more than a very few such dwarfed, stinted, and undeveloped human beings. But we may conclude that there are good reasons for the permission of many other things which we call unfortunate and deplorable, such as idiocy, insanity, cruel accidents, etc., which are seen to be necessary, in the view of Providence, on account of the peculiar internal state of those who suffer them, for the promotion of their future good. And this may be equally the case, whether those who suffer these things shall be finally saved or not.

If the execution of this chapter should seem too fragmentary and incomplete, the necessary apology must be the nature of the subject itself; for we can have at best only imperfect and fragmentary views of the designs and operations of the Divine Providence, which are to so great an extent wholly concealed from human apprehension. The author will be satisfied, if what he has said shall seem to do anything towards justifying the ways of God to men, and strengthening the conviction that the Lord is always acting from mercy, even where He appears to be unkind and severe.

AUTHORITY IN THE NEW CHURCH, AND HOW THE WRITINGS OF SWEDENBORG ARE TO BE REGARDED.*

This authority is declared in the Fourth Commandment, which is, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee."

In a meaning higher than that of the letter by "father" is understood "Our Father" in the heavens, and by "mother" the "Bride, the Lamb's wife." There is no other "authority" than these.

The angel who invited John to come to him so that he might show him "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," carried him away in the spirit "on to a mountain great and high," and showed him "that great city, the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."

The city that was seen descending was a representation of "the Lord's New Church as to doctrine." For such as is that particular heavenly doctrine which peculiarly marks the life of any one, such is the street of the Holy City on which he lives. And according to the depth and purity of that life, such is the number of his dwelling on that street.

All things of doctrine were received by Swedenborg directly from the Lord while he was reading the Word. But he gives us much information respecting the spiritual world and its inhabitants, which he obtained from angels and spirits and his own observation.

Doctrine teaches what true life is. For if it does not always mention particular acts, and thus tell us specifically what we are to do, yet it always states spiritual facts that we may govern ourselves accordingly. Thus doctrine is a description of true life, so that those who have it not may know what it is, and be led into it, and those who have it may not stray from it. Doctrine is therefore the life of the

* This brief paper does not assume to be exhaustive, but presents only a few general considerations with reference to an important subject.—Eds.

church in a form that is capable of being presented to the understandings of men, and capable of existing in their memories.

The houses, gardens, etc., of the angels correspond to the "interior things which are from the Lord with them." (H. H. 186.) They are their life in its ultimate forms. The Holy City is the life of the New Church in its ultimate form of doctrine. The houses, the streets, its trees, its pure river of water of life, its tree of life bearing twelve manner of fruits, correspond to and represent interior things which that church receives or is to receive from the Lord. The interior life of the church, that is, *the essential church, is what finite beings receive, or are capable of receiving from the Lord.*

The doctrines which Swedenborg received directly from the Lord, while reading the Word, are the church, denoted by the "Holy City, the Bride, the Lamb's wife." And this church is the mother, who is to be honored.

The church, which is what finite beings receive from the Lord, is an image of Him,—it is the Lord dwelling in finite beings. But as He cannot dwell in all His fulness in finite beings, even in their whole complex from the beginning to eternity, that is, as the whole life proceeding from Him can never be fully received by finite beings, there must always be an infinite distinction between Himself and the church. The "Bride, the Lamb's wife," will be forever more and more deeply and fully acknowledging that all her life, all that is in her, is the Lord's, and thus becoming a more and more perfect image of Him and receptacle of Him, yet will never become Himself. The Divine Humanity alone is absolutely one with Jehovah.

While Swedenborg was reading the Word, the living light of its internal sense, in which the Lord is, shone into his mind, and illuminated it so that he could see clearly the end for the sake of which the Word is given, and the ways marked out therein directly leading to that end, and so, too, that he could inwardly perceive, or feel and know, that

what then flowed into him was living, and thus from the Lord. He saw and perceived that "all the Law and the Prophets hang" upon the two great commandments, that the whole Word was written and given to men for the one single purpose of bringing men into heaven by implanting in them, as their ruling loves, the loves of the Lord and the neighbor, *which are heaven*. He saw and perceived in the Word the ways which lead to this heavenly state of life,—and these are the doctrines which he has written for our use.

All men who heartily receive these doctrines have something, more or less, of a similar perception. For they feel them as living truths, and see them as coming from the Word. They would not be apt to speak of them as "their opinions," because there is more or less of an inward feeling or acknowledgment that they are not their own, but the Lord's in them. They do not believe them simply because Swedenborg says they are true,—for they judge of Swedenborg from the doctrines, and not of the doctrines from Swedenborg.

All those who heartily receive the doctrines of the New Church are well aware that this Church "is the Crown of all the churches that have hitherto been in the world." (T.C.R. 786.) They therefore know, that, as all the rays of spiritual light come from one Sun, and thus all truths are in harmony with each other and together form a one, nothing will be or can be revealed hereafter, denying, conflicting, or discordant with them.

They know also, that Swedenborg "was able not only to receive the doctrines of this Church with his understanding, but also to publish them by the press" (T.C.R. 779), and thus to present them so that others can understand them. But they do not know that no other books of the Word will ever be revealed as to their internal sense,—nor that the Church throughout its endless future ages will never need to know any more than can be "received with the understanding," or contained by the understanding, of one individual finite mind.

A GOLDEN WEDDING.

The occasion upon which we are assembled is a comparatively rare one, and it is one of exceptional interest. The age of seventy years is the mature period of life, and consequently the period of the golden wedding must be, in an equal degree, the maturity of the married life; for marriage does not usually take place until twenty years of life have passed.

In this idea of *maturity* there is something of very special interest. It is the Divine way of proceeding, in the first place, to have as an object some definite good and useful end; next to commence a series looking directly to this end; and finally to follow, by gradual, perhaps entirely imperceptible, steps from one member of the series to another, until the end is reached. For example: our Heavenly Father, from His love for us, wills the end of providing us with corn and fruit for food. This end He reaches by a gradual process so slow as to be, at a given moment, imperceptible: in the case of the corn, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. In the case of the fruit — not to go farther back — first the blossom, then the beginning of the fruit, then the fruit in its green growing state, and finally the fruit fully ripe and sweet.

The production of grain and fruit, though it is a subordinate work of our Father, is in correspondence with His manner of performing His greater works,— His works of primary importance; for He says in His Word, "*So* is the kingdom of God, as if man should cast seed into the ground," thus declaring the growth of the Lord's kingdom in men to be in correspondence with the growth of the corn. In the growth of the corn and of fruit, then, there is a correspondence with the gradual production of other and higher things that our Father makes.

Two among the noblest, most excellent of the divine works are a true, upright, just individual man, and a fuller,

more perfect, more useful, man, resulting from a pure, holy union between a husband and wife.

These higher works of the Lord are carried forward and perfected in the same gradual manner as the lower works; indeed, as was said, in a perfectly corresponding manner.

In the work of his *individual regeneration*, a man passes through stages answering perfectly to those of the blade, the ear, and the mature grain, in the case of the corn; and to those of the blossom, the unripe, and finally ripe fruit, in the grape, or other species of fruit.

The same precisely is true of the process of coming into the maturity of the union contemplated in the married life: first, the fragrant blossoming, next the stage of the green growing fruit, and finally the mature fruit in all its mellowness, richness, sweetness.

It may not be out of place to dwell a moment on these three stages.

To do this intelligently, the orderly mature state of marriage must be kept in mind. It is a state, then, of pure love; and pure love is unselfish love — love not of the other for the sake of one's self, but love of one's self for the sake of the other — loving supremely to serve the other, instead of desiring supremely to have the other subservient to us.

In the first state of love — the state in which a young man and young woman first give themselves to and accept each other, supposing this to be done from a pure, heavenly origin, as it ought to be, and as there is all possible tendency to make it — in this first state the two are elevated out of their ordinary, more or less selfish, state, and into an interior, unselfish state, in which a desire for the other's good is predominant, instead of the desire of one's own. In this interior state we regard the relation of marriage as a sacred one, and as not to be defiled by an impure thought. And in this first state there is a delight, a sweetness of a heavenly character,— a sweetness represented by the fragrance of the flowers, which give promise of the delicious fruit which is ultimately to follow.

This delightful introduction to the married life is not, however, the married life itself, any more than the fragrance of the flower is the real substance of the fruit. The fruit has yet to grow. As was said, this first state is an interior one, and when we are in it, we are elevated above our every-day worldly life. Here in our worldly life is where true marriage must ultimate itself, and have its basis. And here selfishness has its seat, and will entirely exclude the unselfish state belonging to marriage until the selfish state is itself excluded. And here comes in the work of the married life, represented in the green growing fruit. In this our lower mind there is a strong tendency to put our own pleasure first, and our partner's last, and to feel hurt if our partner is not devoted to our gratification. Hence, in order to fulfil our marital duties, we are obliged to be a great deal employed in denying ourselves, putting aside our selfishness, and doing what we do not love to do. It is evident that though the faithful doing of this work avoids all disturbance, and is, in fact, causing the fruit which has germinated to grow, yet it cannot be said while we are occupied mainly with this work, that we are in a sweet, companionable, happy, and happiness-inspiring state. We are, in fact, in the stage of the fruit while it is green, and before it becomes filled with its delicious, nourishing juices.

But as every day's sunshine, air, and moisture advance the green fruit towards ripeness, so every day's experience of the married pair, supposing them to be faithfully doing their duty to each other, advances them towards the state of ceasing to need the compulsion of duty in filling their relations, — towards a state of pure love for each other, and delight in doing good each to the other, rather than in receiving it.

This is the mature state of wedded love. This is the state to which a faithful filling of the duties of the married life according to the Divine laws, will certainly lead. The sweet blossoms of the spring are no more certain, in a favoring season, to be followed by the delicious fruit in

autumn, than a faithful married life is to result in such rich spiritual fruit as has been described.

This is called a golden wedding, and most appropriately, not only from the high representation of gold itself, but also from the golden tint which characterizes the harvest of corn and many of the excellent kinds of fruit.

Dear friends, we sincerely hope, and we are happy in believing, that you have so filled your marriage relation, as to have brought to maturity some of its appropriate fruit. But though this may be so, and though you may have some consciousness that it is so, yet you can, at the best, have but little sense of it, comparatively now, in these mortal bodies, and in the obscurity necessarily connected with this earthly state. But, in due time, there will be entrance upon the eternal state; and "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," the blessedness of the love, and the fulness of the union which God hath prepared in the other world for those who have worthily performed their duties in their married life here on earth.

THE NEED OF A SURE FAITH.

In looking upon a city from some distant point, one cannot but be impressed by the innumerable church-spires which rise above the crowded mass of buildings, into the clear sky. A devout man, as he looked upon them, might think that there, indeed, amid the storm and whirl and eager striving, was peace. There God's Word reached down into the hearts of men, restrained their ambitions, refreshed them when weary, and kept their feet in the straight and narrow way. He might reflect, that under the shadows of those spires men gathered every Sabbath to listen to the divine teachings, and from those churches an influence went forth that was felt in the city's remotest street.

However pleasing such reflections might be, they are far from the reality. The churches are losing their hold upon the minds of men. Their beliefs are weakening, their control over the daily lives of those who worship with them grows less and less. There seems to be a distrust of the old-time beliefs, and the barriers between the old-church societies and the world seem breaking down. There are multitudes who are turning restlessly from the belief of their fathers, and, with minds unsettled, are growing more and more indifferent to religious observances. Does the Sabbath have the same sanctity and restraint that it once had? Do men feel it their duty to assemble together to worship God on that day? The thinly-attended churches, the crowded streets, the Sunday excursions, the overflowing horse-cars, all testify to the contrary. Do men carry religion with them in their hours of business and pleasure? Does it restrain them when they are tempted to be dishonest or uncharitable, does it cheer them when they are despondent, does it strengthen them in times of calamity? If temptation is resisted, is the motive for resisting because the Lord commands it? These are vital questions; for a religion that does not enter into the daily life of man, and is not with him in every hour, is not worthy of the name. Then again, do those who profess religion feel sure of what they say they believe? Does the Lord seem real and present to them, and are they certain about the other world, and an immortal life there? In a recent article in the *New York Nation*, the lack of faith within the churches is dwelt upon, and the following extract will show the state of doubt that exists in many minds: —

"People do not believe in the fall, the atonement, the resurrection, and a future state of reward and punishment at all, or do not believe in them with the certainty and vividness which are needed to make faith a constant influence on a man's daily life. They do not believe they will be damned for sin with the assurance they once did, and they are consequently indifferent to most of what is said to them of the need of repentance. They do not believe the story of Christ's life, and the theory of His character and attributes

given in the New Testament, or they regard them as merely a picturesque background to His moral teachings, about which a Christian may avoid coming to any positive conclusion. No man who keeps himself familiar with the intellectual and scientific movements of the day, however devout a Christian he may be, likes to question himself as to his beliefs about these matters, or would like to have to define accurately where his faith ended and his doubts began. If he is assailed in discussion by a sceptic, and his combativeness roused, he will probably proclaim himself an implicit and literal acceptor of the Gospel narratives; but he will not be able to maintain this mental attitude alone in his own room."

In view of this condition of things amongst those who profess belief in the old doctrines of the church, it is not unbecoming in those who believe they are members of the Lord's New Church, to consider the lesson which it teaches. Without doubt it shows that the old-time beliefs are not sufficient for the present, and that the minds of men are being prepared for the reception of higher truth. But there is another lesson which it will be well for those who say they are in the light of truth to take to heart. Though one should have great knowledge of that which the New Church teaches, yet unless he holds those teachings sacred, unless they are active in his life, unless he is firm in his belief of them, he will grow lukewarm and inactive, and the good seed will be as if sown in shallow ground, or in stony and thorny soil.

> "Whether there many be, or few,
> Elect the heavenly goal to win,
> Truly I know not — this I know:
> That none who march with footsteps slow,
> That none who fight with hearts untrue,
> That none who serve with service cold,
> The Eternal City shall behold,
> Or enter in."

Every man, to be at all successful in the affairs of life, must govern himself by fixed principles. He must have es-

tablished within him certain courses of conduct from which in time of action he will not swerve. It will not do in the rush of business, in the hurry of worldly events, to stop and argue with one's self whether it is best to be honest, or to speak the truth, or to deal justly. We should know that before hand, and on that knowledge should act as from intuition. There are certain fixed rules of principle among men, which are acknowledged as true, and about which there can be no doubt. That it is right to be honorable, to keep one's promises, to be temperate, to be punctual, to be active in the prosecution of business, are truths which few will deny. No sceptic or jeering critic can shake a man's faith in them, even in the most desponding hour of his life.

Now, when a man is impelled by the desire to lead a higher life, he needs to have a firm, sure faith in all that pertains to his new existence. He needs to know about the Lord and His Commandments, and it is necessary for him to be sure of the truth of that which is taught him. He must form in his hours of meditation, such resolutions as will enable him to resist temptation. It is very necessary that the resolves of the closet should be carried out in the world. When men are tempted, it is the time to act, not to argue. To decide on keeping from the performance of certain acts because we know it is the Lord's will that we should refrain from them, and to keep from them when tempted, because of that resolve, is a safe and sure method. It is a common way for temptation to influence men by presenting doubts as to whether or not it is sinful to do that which at other times we know to be so. A man agitated by doubts as to his religious belief, shaken in his confidence of the Heavenly Father, fearing that the Bible may not be true, doubting as to the other world, is in a state of the utmost danger. Such a man, when tempted, will find these doubts rise up against him with terrible power. However eager he may have been in the cause of goodness, his energies will fail, his desire for a good life will weaken, and he will fall to the level of thousands who drift along with unmeaning

lives. Though nothing worse should happen, he will become passive in his goodness, not growing worse perhaps, though I doubt if that can be, but certainly not becoming any better.

When a man connects himself with any church society, his motive for so doing should not be for pleasure or for social benefits, or because he will be highly esteemed. It is because the truths of the Lord's Word have aroused him to the need of a better life. It is because he feels that his spiritual safety, his faith, and his life requires that he should join the company of those who are brothers in the Lord, and are fighting, side by side, the foes within and without them. It is because he needs to be instructed, to be helped, to be directed, to be almost urged sometimes, along the upward path. A Christian's life is not an easy or luxurious one. To follow the Lord is not a comfortable journey. It might seem different now, than when the disciples followed Him in Galilee, or when the apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. Yet inwardly, the path is as rocky and as difficult, and the need for self-denial as pressing as in those early days. A Christian's life is a continual battle between what is higher and what is lower. Dallying will not do, half-believing will not answer. The church gives to man those truths, those incentives to action which he needs. It keeps his faith alive within him, and furnishes him always a refuge from the assaults of the enemy. If he is passing through certain temptations, he finds there others who have suffered the same, and who by their counsel will give him strength. If he is troubled by doubtful questionings, he can lay them before those wiser than he. In short, he can find there all that he needs for his spiritual guidance and refreshment. It is very important, then, that the church itself should stand serenely on a sure faith. It should not be disturbed by vain and curious questionings, by dissensions, by quarrels as to points of doctrine, but should rest firmly on the simple, fundamental truths which all can understand. There should be no doubting of these.

The church should be jealous of any interference with them, or questioning as to their truth. No breath should touch them, no disaster affect them. If the church is to be assailed, or its doctrines doubted by those within it, its use is weakened. We can call to mind the truths upon which as a rock our church is founded: The Lord's Second Coming; The Internal Sense of the Scriptures; The Doctrines of the Lord, of Life, of The Other World. These truths are very precious. They who have once received them cannot turn away from them. As the disciples said to the Lord when He asked them if they also would go away from Him, so we might say of our church: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

We want to feel in our every walk in life that we have a sure and abiding rock whereon we can stand. Every day there comes some temptation that would shake our faith if we had not this firm abiding-place. We see men in high places, and prominent in religious observances, proving faithless to trusts reposed in them. The air is filled with doubtful questionings. Men seem to be growing indifferent about their spiritual welfare. The old churches are losing their hold upon men. One by one their doctrines are assailed, and the faith of their followers is weakened in them. To the searching questions which science is asking them they make but feeble replies. Surely it is well for us that, amid all this turmoil and doubt, we have a quiet resting-place. To every question that may be asked our church has an ample and satisfying answer. There is no need for us to say: "We hope these doctrines are true," for we know them to be true. With calm assurance we can perform the duties of our lives, and know that all is well. Of all that we need in hours of temptation, all that we need in the conduct of our lives through its myriad winding channels, all that we need for our comfort, our strength, our hope, of all that we can wish to know of the life after this has ended, of all, in short, of the Lord, of our neighbor, of our life in this world and that to come, the church has

rich and abundant treasure. Thus it should be precious to us, and we should be careful to uphold it, and to strengthen it by every means in our power. Above all things should internal dissensions and disputes be put away. Whatever differences there may be, for it is not possible in this world that there should be none, they ought to be discussed and considered in the broad and charitable spirit which the Master has taught. I may desire a certain thing, you may wish for another, but we each should be willing to regard our desire as of little account in comparison with the wants of all the rest. It has been said that a man is happiest when he forgets himself. Let us forget ourselves in our love for the church, and we shall find that we will be brought nearer to the Lord, nearer to our neighbor, nearer to a useful and a happy life. We cannot lightly regard the church which has led us through varying experiences from a lower to a higher state. We cannot turn coldly away from it, when we think that here we have been baptized, have received the right-hand of fellowship, have been married, have had our children baptized, have partaken of the Holy Supper, with its blessed experiences. "If I forget thee, Oh Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

But while we should thus regard the church with affection and reverence, it does not follow that we should yield to it a slavish and unreasoning obedience, nor should we give our spiritual concerns entirely into the hands of others. The obedience I mean is consistent with the largest freedom, inasmuch as no man should render it unless he has first assured himself that he is obeying, not the dictates and traditions of men, but the teachings of Divine Truth. When the church does not convey Divine truth to men in its purity, when it substitutes human doctrines, then is it not a church, and its use is gone. It is well for us always to watch jealously that this does not happen, and strive to keep it from the interpretations of men. Let us be certain, however, that we are not seeking to put forward our own

interpretation. There is no danger of being led blindfold, even though we are willing to be servants of the church, and through the church, of the Lord. He who obeys the Lord's teachings is freeing himself from the bondage of sin and of self, and growing more and more into true liberty.

I have written this from a firm conviction that men need in their spiritual, as well as their temporal concerns, a sure and abiding faith, and that this faith is best taught and kept alive by the church. We cannot wander here and there, as sheep without a shepherd, and have it well with us. We cannot afford to waste our lives in vacillating from one theory to another, or in constant argument about the great truths of religion. While we are thus engaged the years pass by, and Lo, our earthly life is nearly ended, and instead of the rich harvest that we should have gathered our garners are empty, or filled at best with chaff. We may open our eyes then, and see that others, who had been content to learn the Commandments, and to do them, who had been willing to yield what the world calls liberty to the mild and gentle rule of the Lord and His church, had grown into the fulness of Christian manhood, and having been proved faithful over earthly things, were worthy to become rulers over heavenly ones. What is true of an individual man is also true of the church. So long as it holds firmly and steadfastly to its truths, and suffers no deviation from them, so long as it maintains its authority as to its doctrines, and keeps them pure and unsullied, its power of usefulness will never fail. It is well for us, then, to give the church our allegiance, and to regard it with deep affection. Let us not be fearful of losing our freedom. Self-love is always presenting that fear when men are endeavoring to bring themselves under the restraint of good influences.

The prophet Daniel, when he prayed and gave thanks to God, had his windows opened towards Jerusalem. Whenever we read in the Bible of the captive Jews, we find them regarding their city of Jerusalem with the greatest love and reverence. To them, indeed, it was a holy city, and no

absence could turn their thoughts away from it, or destroy their reverence for the city wherein their temple was built, or their longing that their feet might stand again within its gates. It was present in their thoughts, whatever they might do or suffer, or wherever they might be exiled. There is a spiritual Jerusalem now, which should be as dear to us as was the earthly Jerusalem to the Jews. Though we should be absent, its influence can still be with us. Though we should be weary, or sick, or doubting, or alone, or in captivity, we can carry it in our hearts, and it will be an ever-present help. Like the city set on a hill, it cannot be hid. The light of heaven shines about it, illumining its every part with a radiance that shall reach to the farthest corner of the earth. In that light, all questions of science and philosophy, all the perplexities and doubts that trouble men's minds, can be solved. "And in that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

DOCTRINE.

THERE is a violent prejudice in the world against the very name of doctrine, and some of those now in the New Church came from other church bodies and once partook of this prejudice, which especially prevails among so-called "liberal" Christians.

They will remember that all ideas concerning any of the particulars of religious knowledge were regarded as matters of individual opinion. Indeed, some of the most general and primary principles of belief were similarly viewed; for instance, the question of a life hereafter, of the consequences of leading the present life in an improving or destructive manner, and of the true manner of accounting for evil and affliction.

Under these circumstances, and in that way, when a

minister delivered a "doctrinal" sermon, he was regarded as elaborating his own opinion, and the result was unsatisfactory to his hearers in nine cases out of ten; so that, if they knew beforehand that the sermon on a certain day would be doctrinal, many would stay away from service.

They desired what they called "practical sermons," and nothing else, and by this they meant sermons which they could understand, and which seemed to apply to their daily affairs.

If they had been told that there was a church which had books of doctrine, and that the congregations composing it heard doctrine every Sabbath, they would have thought of the people only with pity, and of the ministers with aversion. And in so doing, they would have made a very great mistake.

It may be that some New-Church people, from old associations with the word, do not use it much, and do not altogether like the sound of it; but if, into their idea of doctrine, there enters anything of the old notion that it is merely the weapon of theological warfare, the stale food served out by unaccommodating preachers, and inapplicable information, if true at all, they in turn are greatly mistaken.

False doctrine is uninteresting, does not apply in one's affairs, and it answers for argument and for very little else. If it has been preached, it is no wonder that lay people were wearied, and could not make it seem worth while to listen.

But when they call for "practical" sermons, and when they hear them with interest, and speak of them at home, and remember them in the week, what are they dealing with? What do they call it? Practical truth, perhaps. That is doctrine; and nothing else is worthy of the name. And every sermon which truly looks to enlightening men and strengthening them, is a doctrinal one, or it is a failure.

Swedenborg tells how this is true. "There is only one doctrine throughout the Word, which is the doctrine of charity," is his statement in n. 3445 of the Arcana Cœlestia.

And "charity," he says, is "to perform one's duty faithfully," Doctrine of Life, n. 114. In other words, when one teaches another anything which helps him in his religious experience, he is teaching him something of doctrine.

The "liberal" body already referred to has no doctrines upon which it is agreed, with perhaps two or three points excepted. It has no statement of any for this reason, and people in it say it is inexpedient to have one. Here is another great mistake.

Is it not expedient, for example, that we should know to whom to pray, and that we should realize Him to whom we speak? Prayer cannot be intelligently uttered otherwise; and if we have no doctrine on the subject, that is, if we have no practical information on the subject, we cannot pray in a manner becoming men and women. And if we have an erroneous idea, our doctrine impedes us. We are impeded if we try, or feel we must try, to think of three Divine persons, which is practically just as impossible as to think of three centres in a circle. We are impeded if we try to think of God as not embodied in the Lord Jesus Christ, but as He is, for instance, to the Jews; which is also practically impossible,— not impossible to think of, but impossible to act upon; as much so as it would be to realize a man without any face or form.

When we come in some degree to see clearly, and to pray understandingly, and when we find ourselves acting upon information which is just what we need in this matter, we are using doctrine of the right sort. We are in possession of enlightenment drawn from the Lord's Word, and we shall be very glad to hear more, and to listen to sermons full of doctrine upon this subject, because we can use, and need to use, all we can get.

There are other matters of religion of equal importance, and in ignorance of which we suffer seriously. One is the relation we sustain to the Lord, another is the prospect of a future life, a third is the necessity of regeneration. There are a score of these, and the people who are without doc-

trine on such points, that is, without intelligible practical information, are in an unenviable state. If they have ministers who cannot teach with some clearness and certainty, and who have only opinions on these subjects, they are to be pitied.

Inexpedient to have a statement of faith! Then inexpedient to believe,—to have a working plan of salvation. For if they knew the truth they would state it at once, that is, put it into definite and comprehensive words, and use it and teach it to their soul's advancement.

Doctrine is to religion what laws of nature are to natural science. They are the gist of it, the reduction to simplest terms. And what knowledge of law does to nature, the knowledge of doctrine does to that other manifestation of Infinite Wisdom, the Sacred Scriptures. It makes plain what otherwise would be dark.

This is the test of doctrine, because it is its only use. Unless it is practical, it is false doctrine. The Lord said that all the Law and the Prophets hang upon the laws of love to God and man. Unless doctrine applies at once to our duty to God and the fellow-man, it is false, a human invention, a dangerous thing.

All doctrine comes from the Word, because this is the depository of all divine revelation for the use of Christian men. The books of doctrine which were written by Swedenborg came from the Word, namely, from the unfolding to him, by the Divine Mercy, of the genuine meaning. Preaching of true doctrine must be from the Word, or it is human opinion merely.

In the New Church, we have so much doctrine because we need it all, because it may be brought into use now to our benefit, and because, if it be now brought into use, the New Church will be built up, and is built up in that degree to which our doctrines are doctrines of life with us.

Can we be sure,—the question may arise in this connection,—can we be sure that we have doctrines instead of opinions? Most certainly. One of the harmful teachings of so-called liberalism points to the inability of feeling sure

in religious matters. We can feel sure in them unless it is impossible to be sure at all. If a man has driven his horse twenty years, and one should ask him, "Are you sure that is a horse, and not a puppet?" he would be able to answer at once. So if a man has had a doctrine, and used it twenty years, or ten, or one, he can feel sure of it. To attain this certainty, he must not merely have it and look at it, he must use it.

If, at the end of a fair trial, it still seems somewhat imperfect, let him hold it lightly, as ready to resign it for a better. If it fails to serve him at all, let him seek further at once. But if it serve him well, responding to every requirement, and becoming a precious part of his knowledge, he may feel sure it is the Lord's own gift.

Who would have the face to ask one of our older members whether or not he feels sure of his doctrines? Have they not answered his every need for many years? Then they are sufficiently proved. He can come to certainty, and to a position which the man, whose church has no doctrines, will not comprehend nor appreciate, until he has followed in the same path.

Doctrine, if it be true, is like a key which admits us to a warm house, and locks out the cold and night behind us. Doctrine, if it be erroneous, either will open nothing, or will admit to some obscurely-lighted room; nor will it close the door tightly behind us, but wind and cold will still reach us from without.

There are some now in the New Church, who, by its doctrines, have been admitted into faith from unbelief, into light from obscurity; and, what is of more consequence, they have been admitted from coldness of heart and an irreligious life into a quickened affection for the Lord and His creatures. They are no longer in doubt, and they feel unspeakable gratitude that their doctrines will admit them to still higher light, if properly used, so that no experience of this life will seem dark, while they will contemplate the other as a very home.

What, then, of doctrine, and the prejudice against the name? Plainly, the feeling has been engendered by the teaching of false and unreasonable doctrines, and the unsatisfactory attempts to explain them. But true doctrine, being simply information out of the Word, making the Word plain, is the very bread of life. The Sabbath should be a feast day to us, with the minister to wait upon us with this heavenly food. Every week should see us gaining doctrine, namely, the intelligence needed in our daily religious concerns. And at the close of this life, taking with us the riches of this sort which we have gained, we will go on, if worthy to do so, getting and using more information, more doctrine of the Divine Word.

SACRED MUSIC.

VII. ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS.

At the close of the last chapter the external form and structure of the Psalms were the subject under consideration; and our attention had been directed in a general way to the law of parallelism, in accordance with which they were written. This is a point which will richly repay a more protracted examination.

Closer study will show us that the same law of parallelism is operative even to the minutest particulars. Not only the verses, but the sentences; not only the sentences, but the phrases; not only the phrases, but the single words, respond to each other. There are everywhere wheels within wheels, beautifully illustrating the same governing principle. Let us take, for example, some verses from the twenty-fourth Psalm, which were previously quoted. The parallelism which we noticed was expressed as follows:

1. "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof:"
2. "The world, and they that dwell therein."

But if we scrutinize more closely, it is easily seen that we can carry our analysis farther. Dividing the above lines into two parts each, we find that the fractions balance each other as perfectly as the totals. Thus, "the earth is Jehovah's" is answered by "the world (is Jehovah's);" "the fulness thereof," by "they that dwell therein." Again:

1. "For he hath founded it upon the seas,"
2. "And established it upon the streams."

Here we have the parallels, "founded it," "established it," "upon the seas," "upon the streams." So, too, in the next verse: "Who shall ascend?" is answered by "who shall stand?" "into the mountain of Jehovah," by "in his holy place;" and yet the two complete sentences are equally responsive to each other.

This compound parallelism is strikingly exemplified in the following passage from the nineteenth Psalm:

1. "The law of Jehovah is perfect, converting the soul:"
2. "The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple."
1. "The statutes of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart:"
2. "The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes."
1. "The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever:"
2. "The judgments of Jehovah are true and righteous altogether."
1. "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold,"
2. "Sweeter also than honey, and the dropping of the combs."

So perfect is the parallelism throughout this passage, that not a sentence, phrase, nor scarcely a word, is without its correlative sentence, phrase, and word. For example:

1. "The statutes of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart,"

is answered by

2. "The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes."

The first clauses in each line respond to each other, and the second clauses respond to each other; "the commandments of Jehovah" makes answer to "the statutes of Jehovah," "commandment" to "statutes," "enlightening" to "rejoicing," "eyes" to "heart."

So we might go on without limit, and many additional points of interest with respect to the structure of the Psalms might be stated and illustrated. But enough has been said to show the grand controlling principle, to which all other matters are subordinate.

A few remarks may here be appropriately made in relation to the language in which the Psalms were originally written. That language (the Hebrew) is far more capable than our own of expressing Divine and heavenly thought. It is, so to speak, much more pliant and flexible under spiritual influences. It is more easily moulded into a fit body of words to contain the soul of meaning. It is more nearly related than any modern tongue, to the primitive angelic speech. For, as we know, from the doctrines of the New Church, that speech is something implanted in the spiritual nature of man. Coming into heaven, he does not have to learn it; but it is instinctive with him, like the cry of a beast, or the song of a bird. Nothing which another angel may say to him is unintelligible, for the words are the transparent and self-evident outflow of the thoughts and affections. And the Hebrew, more than any other language extant, is akin to this. Swedenborg says, —

"Angelic language has nothing in common with human languages, except with some words, which sound from a certain affection; yet not with the words themselves, but with their sound, on which subject something will be said in what follows. That angelic language has not anything in common with human languages is evident from this, that it is impossible for the angels to utter one word of human language. This has been tried, but they could not; for they cannot utter anything but what is altogether in agreement with their affection. That which is not in agreement is repugnant to their very life; for life is of affection, and

their speech is from it. I have been told that the first language of men on our earth agreed with the angelic language, because they had it from heaven; and that the Hebrew language agrees with it in some things." — H. H. 237.

But let us return to our law of parallelism, and consider the higher, — the spiritual, — grounds on which it rests; for these are not hidden from our knowledge.

The Scriptures, being the Word of God, in fact, as well as in name, must needs partake of God's own nature. Though, in their lowest or literal sense, they are wondrously accommodated to the states of external men, their Divine quality cannot be concealed, but constantly shines through them, revealing Him from whom they proceed, and who is their inmost life and essence. This is the real secret of their influence, which has been tacitly acknowledged by thousands of devout and humble readers, for many generations.

The first thing to be remembered respecting the essential nature of the one God, is that He is love itself and wisdom itself, or, what is the same, goodness itself and truth itself. This dual form of His life finds expression in man, who is made in His image, after His likeness. For the mind of man consists of two parts, which are called will and understanding; and all his mental operations are comprised under the two general heads of loving and thinking. His will was formed to be the receptacle of goodness from the Lord, and his understanding to be the receptacle of truth from the Lord. When truth in his understanding is united with goodness in his will, he is in the genuine order of his being. This union or marriage of goodness and truth in him is what makes him an angel,— a spiritual and eternal image of his Heavenly Father.

It is the duality of the Divine nature which betrays itself in the twofold mode of expression to which our attention has been called. Love answering to wisdom, goodness to truth, are the deep spiritual cause of Scripture parallelisms. These are the two essential elements, which, everywhere

combining, form a more perfect *one*. Bald and barren would the language of Scripture be, if it gave them no utterance. If it were possible that, instead of two parallel phrases where they occur, we should have but a single matter-of-fact statement, what a void would be created! There would be less of what unappreciative or unbelieving writers might call pleonasm, or oriental exuberance of language, but the Bible would no longer be the Bible to us. Its own Divine life and soul would have died out of it. We might not be able to state the reason why the same ideas clothed in different language suffered such a loss of power. But the real cause would be that the holy marriage of goodness and truth was no longer expressed.

Every part of the Lord's Word shows forth that marriage. But it is nowhere more plainly perceptible upon the very surface, than in the book of Psalms. It would almost seem that the Holy Spirit, bursting forth in these Divine poems, found itself under less restraint of language, than when bound in continuous narrative to the actual facts of history. But be this as it may, every portion of the Scriptures is perfectly fitted for its purpose.

Let us, according to our custom, briefly attend to what Swedenborg has to say on this subject:

"That the marriage of the Lord and the church, and thence the marriage of the good and the true, is in every part of the Word, has not hitherto been seen; nor could it be seen, because the spiritual sense of the Word has not been disclosed, and that marriage cannot be seen except by means of that sense; for there are two senses in the Word, concealed in the sense of its letter, which are called the spiritual and the celestial. In the spiritual sense in the Word, those things which are of it refer themselves chiefly to the church; and in the celestial chiefly to the Lord; and also in the spiritual sense, those things which are of it refer themselves to the Divine truth, and in the celestial, to the Divine good; thence there is in the Word that marriage. But this does not appear to any one, except to him, who, from the spiritual and celestial senses, knows the signification of words and names; for some words and names are predicated of good, and some of truth,

and some include both, wherefore, without that knowledge, that marriage in every part of the Word cannot be seen; this is the reason why this arcanum was never before discovered. Since there is such a marriage in every part of the Word, therefore many times, in the Word, there are two expressions, which appear like repetitions of one thing; but yet they are not repetitions, but one refers itself to good, and the other to truth, and both, taken together, make their conjunction, and so one thing. Thence also is the Divine holiness of the Word; for, in every Divine work, there is good conjoined to truth, and truth conjoined to good." — T. C. R. 248.

HEAVEN.

"I HEAR thee speak of a better land;
Thou call'st its children a happy band.
Mother, oh, where is that radiant shore?
Shall we not seek it, and weep no more?"— *Mrs. Hemans.*

HEAVEN'S within thee, darling child,
When pure are all thy thoughts, and mild.
Heaven's within thee, happy boy,
When thou delightest in others' joy.
Heaven's within thee, pretty elf,
When loving thy neighbor as thyself.
It grows within thee supremely blest,
When loving thy Father beyond the rest.
'Tis here, 'tis here, my child.

Angels around thee, in loving bands,
Encamp, when thou keepest God's commands.
Doves float about thee, and lambs find food,
Whene'er thy heart is in gentle mood;
And all things lovely and pure and sweet
Come forth, thy happy thoughts to meet.
Heaven's around thee, precious boy.
Listen, and hear its sounds of joy.
'Tis here, 'tis here, my child.

Heaven's within thee, dearest child.
Thy Lord hath looked on thee, and smiled.
And He shall enter in to sup,—
To share with thee the bread and cup.
"Give Me thy love," thou hear'st Him call.
"For this one priceless pearl sell all.
Cast out all baneful things, and see,
My kingdom is made sure in thee."
'Tis here, 'tis here, my child.

BOOK NOTICES.

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS IN RELIGION. By JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE. Boston: American Unitarian Association, 7 Tremont Place. 1878. In paper covers, 25 cents; cloth, 50 cents.

THIS little book is a Unitarian contribution to the discussion of religious subjects which is now exciting so much thought in Boston.

The author is well known in the community for his good common sense, practical philanthropy, and independence. His writings are almost entirely free from the common errors of dogmatic theology, but present instead what can hardly be called a theology, but a good, natural basis for theology. They show clear views of morality and benevolence, but very obscure ideas of spiritual things. Yet such spiritual ideas as are presented,— concerning the Lord, the Bible, and a future life, for example,— are good as far as they go, and are held strongly from actual experience of their practical value. It would seem as if the same candid reasoning, applied to more definite spiritual knowledge and experience, would produce eminently satisfactory results.

A strong desire to find good in all religions is evident in the book. Socrates, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha — all had faith "in an unseen Power, higher than anything seen, who would help those who came to Him." (p. 19.) The same faith the author finds in Augustine, Luther, and Wesley, with a difference thus expressed: "I gladly admit and proclaim that Christ has lifted the world to a higher faith than it had before, or has now outside of Christianity. But is it a *different* faith; or is it not *the same*, deepened, purified, and

elevated?" (p. 20.) "The same," we should answer, "with very distinct differences, depending upon the ideas entertained of the object of faith; just as an appetite for food may be said to be common to all creatures, yet varies almost into opposites according to the kind of food desired."

Dr. Clarke's remarks upon Christianity are exceedingly interesting: —

"The only progressive religion in the world to-day is Christianity. All others are decayed, arrested, or retrograde. But Christianity is capable of self-development. It unfolds itself into new forms, puts forth new branches, and makes every day a new heaven and a new earth. . . .

"The principle of this wonderful vitality is to be found in Christ himself. Christianity is not an abstract creed — a system of thought; it is not a philosophical system. It is the personal influence of a great soul. Christendom may say, as the Apostle said, 'The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God.' One method by which the Creator causes the progress of humanity is by sending new impulses into the world through great men. Every civilization has been largely made what it is by the influence of great souls. . . . The great souls of history almost constitute history. But *one* towers above them all; so that, as Horace said of Zeus, 'There is nothing like him — nothing next to him.' . . . . I believe, with Augustine, with Luther, and with Fénélon, with Wesley and Swedenborg, that Christianity is the life of Jesus himself, prolonged and unfolded on the earth. . . . He is still the great power in human history — the great motor in human progress." (pp. 37–42.)

This is excellent; we only wonder that, seeing so much, Dr. Clarke can still speak of the Lord as simply our "brother man." And the wonder grows in reading the following explanation of the sense in which he understands the Lord to be Divine,— so nearly true, and the whole truth: —

"I believe Jesus to have been Son of God, and Divine, because filled full of the Divine truth and love, and always abiding therein. He alone, of the sons of men, was always resting on the Infinite Love. . . . His divinity did not consist in any technical or metaphysical deity of person, but in living in constant communion with God, so as to be a perpetual manifestation of the Divine truth and love. . . . Christ's divinity consists in being the image of the unseen God,— of God manifest in a man. God is manifest in nature; He is also manifest in Providence, in history, in the intuitions of the soul. But in Jesus, God speaks to us through human lips and a human life; and so, by our brother-man, brings us to himself." (pp. 48, 49.)

If to this could be added a fair interpretation of these three

sentences: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore, also, that holy thing that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" — we should have a very perfect presentation of the New-Church teaching upon the subject.

The chapter on "The Bible" is mainly occupied by attempts to show the absurdity of the idea of verbal inspiration. Of course this is very unsatisfactory, and would fall to the ground before any just explanation of the nature of inspiration and of the spiritual sense. Yet we read: —

"The power of the Bible is not in its letter, but its spirit. . . . The power of the Bible is that it brings God to man, and lifts man to God; that it shows a providence reaching through all history, and whose everlasting arms are below all things; a Father whose love comes down into the heart of every child, who cares for us all, and is the Saviour of all. The Holy Spirit that pervades this book is *The Comforter*. It brings comfort in our sorrows, light in our darkness, hope in our despair." (p. 79.)

Readers of the book will find in it much good sense in regard to the use of a church; the nature of sudden conversion, as related to a gradual education to religious life; the need, nevertheless, of a real conversion; together with much that is less satisfactory, especially in regard to Saving Faith. But we must content ourselves with one more brief extract, which shall be from the last chapter, on "Belief in a Future Existence": —

"The conception of heaven which has prevailed, as a paradise of delight, a garden of all enjoyments, is not likely to be realized. Such a heaven as this would soon become tiresome. Passive enjoyment is not what God intends for us. He educates us here by stern necessity to toil; he teaches us caution, prudence, industry, by a sharp discipline; and it is probable that something of this kind of education may be continued hereafter." (p. 145.) W.

TRANSCENDENTALISM, WITH PRELUDES ON CURRENT EVENTS. By JOSEPH COOK. Boston: James R. Osgood & Company. 1878. pp. 305.

THIS second volume of the "Monday Lectures" of Mr. Cook has many of the characteristics of the former one. Like that, it shows that its author has read extensively, and that he can pre-

sent his learning in such a way as to be interesting to persons who have no special acquaintance with the subjects of which he speaks. This book, too, has the mannerisms which disfigure the other; and Mr. Cook almost always makes himself so unpleasantly obtrusive, that, however it may have been with those who listened to the lectures, we, at least, among those who read them, find that this feature often detracts from the interest and use of many really valuable passages.

In this work, in which our author takes up the subject of transcendentalism, and Theodore Parker as its chief exponent in New England, there is very much of great value, and it is, on the whole, a valuable commentary, although a brief one, on a very important part of the recent philosophical and religious history of our country. Its principal value, however, appears to us to be its suggestiveness. It points the way to courses of inquiry, and while not itself travelling very far thereon, yet it is helpful to those who desire to go somewhat farther on. The style of the author, too, possesses picturesqueness, and at times even rises to real eloquence, so that apart from the importance of its themes, it cannot fail to interest almost any one who cares to read anything more serious than the last novel.

Mr. Cook, also, frequently has a remarkable felicity in presenting in a few striking passages a picture, as it were, of the subject of his lectures, so as to almost carry conviction by a mere glance thereat. For example, in his third lecture, he is speaking of Theodore Parker's absolute religion, and, at its close, he desires to present this man, who stood at the extreme of so-called liberal religious thought, in contrast with one, orthodox according to Mr. Cook's opinion, and he thus speaks of them: —

"I stood alone at Florence, at the side of the grave of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and looked on the grave of Theodore Parker. The sturdy Appenines gazed on the soft flow of the Arno; melodious murmurs whispered through the fatness of the olive-branches; there fell in deluges out of the unspeakable azure in the Italian sky, the light of the sun and of the Sun behind the sun. I remembered the culture of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and her faith. I could not forget how wide was her outlook upon the inner world, as well as upon the outer, how subtle beyond comment her instincts and intuitions; and in my solitude I asked myself, which faith, hers or his, was likely to be of most service to the world in the swirling tides of history, and which the best support to individual souls in the great waters on which we pass hence? I remembered tenderly the good there was in this man and in this woman; but I asked

which had the better faith for service in great waters. Both loved the poor; there was in each one of these souls at birth a spark out of the empyrean; and, under that Italian azure, I asked which faith had been the most efficient in fanning the spark to flame. It seemed to me, at the side of those graves in Italy, that Elizabeth Barrett Browning, had she stood there alive, would have had eyes before which those of Theodore Parker would have fallen, to rise again only when possessed of her deeper vision."

But it should in fairness be said that Mr. Cook does not trust to such weapons alone in his attack upon the positions held by Theodore Parker. He resolutely assails them with good logic, and frequently well-handled, too. It is comparatively easy, it must be granted, to obtain a dialectic victory when one is alone in the disputation. But our author has done his work in such a way as to make it tolerably difficult, it would seem to us, to overturn many of the arguments with which he has assailed the theological propositions maintained by Parker, and yet he has treated him fairly, and at times even tenderly. It will be admitted, however, it should seem, by the most orthodox of the admirers of Mr. Cook, that his strength in opposing the attacks of Parker upon orthodoxy lies in the fact that orthodoxy means something quite different to him from what it doubtless did to those calling themselves orthodox in a former generation. His audience, at his invitation, loudly vociferate, "No! No! No!" when asked if this is not a monstrous misconception of orthodoxy: "It is this false theology, with its vicarious atonement, *salvation without morality, or piety, only by belief in absurd doctrines*, which has bewitched the leading nations of the earth with such practical mischief." (The italics are Mr. Cook's.) And yet this proposition would hardly have been, fifty years ago, so quickly and so heartily denounced as heterodox by the grandfathers of those who listened to Mr. Cook.

The book frequently, here and there, teaches us the same thing.

That Mr. Cook's orthodoxy is something quite different from the orthodoxy of former times, and from that which men have commonly understood by that term, is apparent almost all through these lectures. In his explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity, this is conspicuously apparent. He is bound down, it is true, by some regard for his creed, but he frequently rises above it into a better atmosphere. For example: —

"Listen to the last words of the martyrs through all the first five centuries

of Christianity. They are these, and such as these: 'O Lord God of heaven and earth, Jesu Christ, to Thee do I bend my neck by way of sacrifice! O Thou who abidest forever!' These were the words of Felix, an African bishop, condemned to death at Venusium. 'O Lord Jesu Christ, Thou Maker of heaven and earth, give peace to Thy Church!' So spoke Theodotus of Anegra in the extremity of torture." "Saturate the centuries with the certainty of the Divine Personal Immanence in matter and mind. Do this, and in the name of Science itself, the laboring ages will slowly learn, not merely admiration, but adoration of one God, incontrovertibly known in external nature, history, and conscience, as Creator, as Redeemer, as Sanctifier." C. H. D.

WORDS FOR THE NEW CHURCH, No. 2. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

THIS second number of the "serial controlled by the Academy of the New Church," follows its predecessor after an interval of four months. Its principal article is a long paper on the "State of the Christian World," in which an elaborate attempt is made to prove, on the authority of Swedenborg's writings, that the spiritual condition and prospects of the nations of Christendom are to the last degree sad and gloomy. Or, to quote the language of the essay itself: "We can have but slender hope of an increasing ratio of good men among the posterity of the consummated church, a people so averted from the Lord and His kingdom, that there remains in them nothing of the church; therefore, no available means by which the Lord can restore them to spiritual life: not from an unwillingness in the Lord, but from an irreclaimable aversion in them." (p. 113.)

We have neither time nor space, at present, for an extended consideration of this point; but we will mention two reasons why neither the citations from Swedenborg nor the line of argument which is pursued, seem to us to authorize the drawing of so dark a picture.

First, whatever may have been the state of the Christian world at the time when Swedenborg wrote, we have no right to assume that it is no better now. On the contrary, we can find abundant cause for believing that it is greatly improved. Our brethren of the Academy have not been able to bring forward any passages from Swedenborg which seem to us at all conclusive on this point, although they quote many which clearly show the dreadful condi-

tion of the church at the time of its consummation, one hundred and twenty years ago.

Secondly, they omit all mention of the distinction so plainly made by Swedenborg between the universal and the specific church. We read, for example, in the "New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine" (No. 244), that "the church of the Lord is everywhere in the universal globe, although it is specifically where the Lord is acknowledged, and where there is the Word." Again, in the work on "Heaven and Hell" (n. 328), "The church of the Lord is spread over all the globe, thus is universal, and all those are in it who have lived in the good of charity according to their religion." This universal church is also compared with the human body, and the specific church, "where the Word is, and where by it the Lord is known," to the heart and lungs in that body. (H. H. 308.) Now it may be granted that the church, in its specific sense, no longer exists among the so-called Christian denominations. But why should we deny them the poor boon of belonging to the universal church, which consists of those in all parts of the globe, who "acknowledge a Divine, and live in charity" (H. H. 308)? And if they may thus be included in the church, though not as before, at its centre, why is it not possible to believe that they may be making some progress under the helpful influences of the New Dispensation, instead of becoming, as our Philadelphia brethren say, "more confirmed in evil than their ancestry"? If there were nothing of the New Church except among those who know and profess its doctrines, we might, indeed, despair of the Christian world. But our reading of Swedenborg does not lead us to any such narrow conclusion. We see no reason to doubt, but every reason to believe, that the Church, in its larger sense, is all around us, and that it is increasing every day.

Other articles of less length and pretension follow this principal paper; but we can speak of only one of them. In the editorial "notes," under the heading of "The Writings and the Issue," a claim is asserted for the Divine nature of Swedenborg's writings, which is to us simply astounding. If the editor does not make those writings equal to the Word itself, then we confess our inability to understand him. He affirms that the doctrines of the New Church, as we have them in the works of Swedenborg, were dictated from the Lord's own mouth. Such being the case, it is

obvious that they can be, in no respect, inferior to the sacred Scriptures. That which proceeds from the Lord's mouth *is* His Word, neither more nor less, and must possess all the nature and attributes of Divinity; nay, must be the Lord Himself.

But, lest we may seem to have misstated the position of the writer in question, we will quote his own language. He says (p. 154): "The Word may be opened in the heavens, and its internal sense formulated into a body of Divine Doctrine given from the mouth of the Lord Himself. And this, we hold, is precisely what we have in the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem. They are Divine Doctrines, unfolded and formulated in heaven by the Lord, and given to Swedenborg to be promulgated for the use of the Church."

If what the Lord formulates,— that is, puts into form,— and gives from His own mouth, is not His Word, then we know of no term in human language by which to designate it. Truly, as the editor says, referring to some former criticisms in this Magazine, there is an "issue" between him and us. J. R.

The Gathering of the Lilies. Illustrated by the author, L. Clarkson. Philadelphia: J. L. Sibole & Co.

We have regretted that this charming volume was not received in time to be noticed last month, as it is one of the most beautiful gift-books which we have ever seen. Poems and pictures, both from the same hand, are alike worthy of sincere praise. The latter, especially, are very exquisite. In the principal poem, which gives the name to the book, the different kinds of lilies are presented in successive drawings, together with the figures of graceful little sprites, by which they are personified. Following each picture is a short stanza, as, for instance, under the Japan lily,—

"We are lilies, every one,
Nodding brightly to the sun,
Proud and happy to be won
By his glance.
Not a flower is so gay
As we are, the livelong day,
And with butterflies we play,
And flit and dance."

The lilies of the valley are made to speak as follows: —

"Pass us by, for we are pale,
Little lilies of the vale;
God hath made us very frail,
Yet we give
Love to all the flowers that grow,
And the flowers love us so;
We are happier than you know,
Just to live."

It is impossible to present in words any just idea of a book like this — of which the illustrations are the greatest part — but we desire to say in conclusion, that there is an atmosphere of innocence and purity about it, which is in striking harmony with its subject. The lilies almost seem to dispense their fragrance, as well as their beauty, throughout its pages. J. R.

MONTHLY NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Rev. Mr. Stone and the New Church in Fryeburg, Maine.

Most of our readers are doubtless familiar with the fact that Rev. B. N. Stone, formerly the pastor of the Congregational Society in Fryeburg, Me., having fully embraced the doctrines of the New Church, and publicly declared his belief in them, was invited by a large number of the inhabitants of the village, including many members of his old congregation, to remain with them as their minister, and to preach freely in accordance with his convictions. The circumstances connected with this case are so interesting, that we think they ought to be placed permanently on record as a contribution to the history of the New Church. Through the kindness of friends, we have come into possession of the following account, written by Mr. Stone himself, in answer to inquiries addressed to him. Though not intended for publication, the writer has kindly granted our request that it may be printed in our columns.

FRYEBURG, Nov. 26, 1877.

MR. ———: *Dear Sir*, — A request has been made to me to give you some account of my recent separation from the Congregational Church; and I am quite willing to comply.

I was brought up in the "evangelical" faith, to which, when I was in Amherst College, I made public confession, and united with the college church. My first serious theological difficulty was in regard to the received doctrine of the Atonement, occasioned mainly by reading Bushnell's "Vicarious Sacrifice" about the time I entered the Bangor Seminary in 1866. I became convinced that the Atonement could not be a reconciliation of God to man, but must be a reconciliation of man to God, though I had not a very clear idea of the way in which the work of the Saviour effected this. In consequence of my belief on this point I did not receive the "license" to preach usually given to the students at their graduation. But since I was regarded in other respects sound in the faith, and personally well qualified for the ministry, Professor Pond advised a Congregational church in Loudon, N. H., to invite me to preach to them. I went to this church, and remained with them four years; meanwhile being regularly ordained and settled as pastor of the church.

During the latter part of this pastorate a "Compendium" of Swedenborg's works came into my hands, which I read with great interest. Afterwards, through Professor Parsons and Mr. Richard Ward, I procured and read several of Swedenborg's works.

In consequence of this reading, when I came to Fryeburg, my doctrinal views in some respects had become greatly modified. I heartily accepted Swedenborg's doctrine of the Lord and His work of redemption, and much that he taught about the human soul and creation. But I was not ready to take his system as a whole; especially to admit his claim to divine illumination and intercourse with the spiritual world. Of course I began to see the possibility as to where my investigation might end. But such an ultimate step at that time seemed quite remote and doubtful. Certainly my interest and sympathy were still strongly with the church that had been my spiritual mother.

However, I tried to be open and honest with the Fryeburg church. I read to them a full and clear statement of my belief, which was declared satisfactory by the council, of which Professor Barbour was moderator.

As I continued to study Swedenborg, I came to clearer ideas of his doctrines, and became more and more convinced of their truth; and in my preaching I gave the people much of this new truth. This was always well received. At least, if they hardly knew what to think of some of my views, no very serious objection, so far as I am aware, was ever made to them. It soon became quite generally known, both here and abroad, that I was reading Swedenborg. But this excited no great uneasiness among my people. "He is tinctured with Swedenborg, but not enough to hurt," was the general opinion.

Public attention was first seriously called to my preaching by the Methodist minister, who came here last year. Although personally he was always friendly to me, yet he seemed to feel it to be his duty to warn the

people of my course. He made several scandalous attacks on Swedenborg, and declared everywhere, in all this region, that I was a Swedenborgian in disguise, working to bring my church over to that faith. But he made no great impression by his zealous efforts. Rather he made himself quite unpopular among my own people.

However, there now began to be considerable talk and secret apprehension about my position. But I think it gradually subsided, until a visit last spring from a committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, engaged in revival work through the State, seemed to bring matters to a crisis. Several circumstances, connected with their work, combined in causing quite a sharp struggle, like that of Jacob and Esau, between the old and new doctrine, but without much really unfriendly feeling.

I now became fully convinced that the time had come for me to declare publicly my belief in the doctrines of Swedenborg. Accordingly, a few weeks later, I did so, and tendered the resignation of my pastorate. In the mutual council thereupon called, after a rambling discussion upon some trivial matters in no way affecting the main issue as to whether the great essential principles of the faith which I had confessed could be allowed to be sound and scriptural, it was advised that my resignation be accepted; and the doctrines of Swedenborg were pronounced "fatal error." It is but just to add that, personally, I was treated with kindness and courtesy by the council.

When I made my confession of the faith of the New Church, I had no definite plan for the future. It did not seem probable that I could remain in Fryeburg.

I knew that there were a very few who had been reading and receiving this new truth, like myself. But I had no reason to suppose that outside that little handful there would be any who would care to follow me under this new name, and leave the church of their fathers. But in this I was very pleasantly mistaken. When the people understood that my doctrines were substantially such as they had heard for the past three years, many began to say, "Let us keep him, if he *is* a Swedenborgian." A paper expressing a desire for me to remain was presented to the council, signed by about forty members of the church, and some two hundred of the citizens.

As soon as I was dismissed, some of these determined to organize another society and invite me to preach to them. I consented to do so, after becoming well assured that they were actuated by a desire to hear this new truth, and that the movement would prove a stable and permanent one.

It is now six months since I began my new work here; our prospects are very bright and encouraging. We have good congregations of very interested hearers every Sunday. The people all through the town are reading our tracts and books. We hope soon to organize a permanent society, and shall try next spring to build for ourselves a house of worship. May the Lord ever water and bless this vine, which His hand has planted in Fryeburg!

Very truly yours,

B. N. Stone.

Modern Thought on the Subject of the Lord's Second Coming.

Most New Churchmen who have endeavored to explain the Heavenly Doctrines to those who were unacquainted with them, will probably testify that the hardest point to present satisfactorily in rational light, is the truth concerning the Second Coming of the Lord. The fact that this event has actually taken place, and that the Last Judgment has been accomplished in the spiritual world, does not meet a ready reception in the ordinary thoughts of men. Within a few years, however, it is evident that a way is preparing for the acceptance of this doctrine. The idea is beginning to find place in men's minds, that the Lord's second advent is to be a spiritual, not a natural, coming; and some writers and preachers are already declaring that it may even now be accomplished.

In its appropriate department in the last number of the Magazine, was a carefully-prepared review of a little work which has lately appeared from the pen of an "Orthodox" clergyman, in which this subject is treated of. Although, as the reviewer shows, the question is by no means handled in a New-Church way, the author is, on the whole, even more remote from the Old-Church way of thinking. At any rate, the mere fact of such a book having been written is interesting and suggestive.

The Four Gospels.

In a former number of the Magazine we reviewed the little work which is referred to in the following communication. We think that in our review we gave to the author's language the only construction which it would legitimately bear. But we are happy to publish the opinion of our intelligent correspondent, whose initials will be generally recognized, as to the meaning which, in the book in question, was probably intended to be conveyed.

"*To the Editors of the 'New Jerusalem Magazine'*:

"I wish to say something respecting your criticism of the book entitled 'The Divine Order of Degrees in Man,' etc., in the August and September numbers of the Magazine. Although I have not seen the book, I suppose I know something of the author's theory. I understand it to be, in brief, this: That the Gospels of John and Luke describe respectively the manner and order of regeneration in the heavenly and the spiritual man; and Matthew and Mark, the regeneration of the spiritual-natural and heavenly-natural degrees or states, and also the glorification of these degrees in the Lord. And if this be the author's meaning, I do not see

how it conflicts with the fact of there being a heavenly, spiritual, and natural sense in each Gospel; because there must be a heavenly, spiritual, and natural way of understanding and describing the regeneration of each of these separate degrees. For example, the Gospel of John may be understood as describing, in those three senses, the way in which the heavenly, the spiritual, and the natural man will understand the regeneration of the heavenly degree; or, as describing what a man or an angel in each of these degrees may or can know respecting it. That is to say, it teaches the angel of each of these degrees how to understand what he needs to know of the regeneration of that particular degree. And so of the other Gospels. I am therefore inclined to regard the theory with some favor, though I do not yet see whether it can be absolutely proved." D. H. H.

Anecdote of the late Dr. E. H. Clarke.

We have received from the publishers, A. Williams & Co., a pamphlet containing the commemorative discourse of Dr. C. A. Bartol on the late Dr. Edward H. Clarke, one of the foremost physicians of Boston during the present generation. Among the many interesting points presented, the following has particularly attracted our attention. Dr. Bartol says: —

"He related to me that one evening, sitting alone in the deepening twilight in his room, he heard a distinct voice saying to him, syllable by syllable, '*There is another world,*'— whether an objective reality or projection of his subjective state, he impartially added, he could not tell."

It should be noted, that Dr. Clarke, though believing, as a philosophical induction, that man must be immortal, professed to have no clear or definite ideas of the life hereafter.

Bequest of the late Miss Martha Crocker.

Miss Martha Crocker, for nearly fifty years a member of the Boston Society of the New Church, who departed this life in July last, left a will, from which the following is an extract: —

"All the residue of the property, real, personal, or mixed, of which I may die seized, or to which I may be entitled at the time of my decease, I give and bequeath to the Boston Society of the New Jerusalem and its successors, the same to be applied in the first instance to the payment of the debt now standing against the building now occupied by the New Jerusalem Society, or for such other beneficial use of the last-named society as the first-named society may deem best."

The amount involved in this bequest cannot now be exactly stated, but will probably not fall short of seven or eight thousand dollars. The two societies alluded to are the corporation of church members and the corporation of pew-owners.